1:Sanders Z-5[illegible] (1952-1959) 1962 EH1 Greece EH1

or too little water; never is it "just right." If there is too much, a drainage project must be undertaken to make much-needed land available for cultivation.

The most noteworthy reclamation project before the turn of this century was the draining of Lake Kopais, just north of Thebes in Central Greece.[10] The work was undertaken by a French company in 1886 and completed by an English company in 1887, which continued to operate the agricultural estate of sixty thousand acres down to its purchase by the Greek government prior to the November elections of 1952. At that time, this large holding, along with its complicated drainage system, was turned over to the former tenants, who had worked for the foreign company. Now as owners, or as members of a cooperative, they face the necessity of making their contribution to the over-all maintenance of the drainage channels so that the water may run off adequately and prevent the land from reverting to its once-marshy condition. According to some foreign technicians, the Greeks are doing a good job of managing this operation.

Much of the time, however, there is too little water through the growing season. One answer to this scarcity has been the recent drilling of hundreds of wells, from which water is pumped to the thirsty fields through irrigation ditches. In addition, a number of ambitious water-control projects have led to considerable storage of water and the spread of irrigation.

In villages usually on the edges of plains watered by streams flowing from a mountain source, the water crier is a unique institution. This individual is encountered, for instance, in the Peloponnesos, where he strides through the streets of the village calling out the name of the person whose patches of land are next in line to receive the flow of water. One of these criers had a voice so powerful that, while standing on the small plain below, he could notify people in the village on the mountainside hundreds of yards away.

A Greek villager, like the Arab, will make much over the merits of the water of his homeplace. To praise the water he will speak of it as *chonephtiko nero*, or "digestive water." He will even fight over it, as the following news item shows.

> Athens. The Kentucky mountaineers' storied concept of feudin' justice reached here recently and two girls were killed and four men were critically injured.
>
> Two Greek villages — Kerasovo and Papadates — went to war a few days ago to settle a dispute over water rights, and 400 men, women, and children battled for hours with clubs, hoes, knives and hand grenades.
>
> Two army companies were sent to restore order.
>
> The cause of the trouble was water. Sovereignty over Cold Fountain, a spring irrigating the wheat-fields of Kerasovo, was contested by the farmers of neighboring Papadates.

1:Sanders Z-5,4 (1952-1959) 1962 EH1 Greece EH1

One night "unknown persons" changed the course of the spring and the water was diverted toward Papadates.

As Kerasovo villagers conferred in the village square, forty villagers from Papadates, armed with stones, assaulted the fringes of Kerasovo.

A general alert was sounded. Hoes were taken from the barns of Kerasovo, knives from the kitchens and hand grenades — relics of the Greek civil war — from various hiding places.

Meanwhile, armed reinforcements arrived from Papadates. Policemen fired into the air to intimidate the enraged villagers, but no one paid any attention.

A few hours later two infantry companies arrived from the nearest town and imposed martial law. Two teen-age girls died from injuries received during the battle. (*New York Times*, September 9, 1954)

The storks like to nest in a village around which there are watered meadows or even marshes. In the village of Almyros, between Lamia and Volos (in Thessaly), a family of storks had built a huge nest of mud and twigs around the cross on the top of the church. "You see," the peasants of Almyros say, "his nest on that spot shows that the stork is a blessed bird." Pharsala, on the main route between Athens and Thessalonike, stands out as a town especially favored by the storks whose coming is considered a good omen. In Epirus and Macedonia and Thrace the evening silence is often broken by the rattlelike noise which this bird makes with his red beak — his white plumage gleaming in the waning sunlight and his long legs silhouetted against the sky. The storks are to the plains what the eagle is to the mountain, one a bird of the lowlands which builds his nests in the chimneys of village homes with people all around, and the other a bird of the heights preferring solitude and willing to pit himself against nature's angriest moods.

Mountains versus Plains

Mountains and plains take on social meaning as people try to gain a living from them. In Greece people frequently speak of "mountain villages" and "plains villages" as though their residents differed from each other. As a matter of fact, both in physical appearance (location, house types, and land use) and in accessibility, the plains and mountain villages are distinct and will be described more fully in a later chapter.

K. D. Karavidas, of the Agricultural Bank of Greece, has for a long time been interested in this problem and points it up by telling an anecdote:

This happened in a mountain village in Central Greece near the Gulf of Corinth. Every year these people would come down to the plains, work fifteen days, and get beans and wheat to carry them through the year. During the German occupation, however, the prices of food went so high that the plains peasants decided to do their own harvesting. They took the produce, which

1:Sanders Z-5,4 (1952-1959) 1962 EH1 Greece EH1

observers did not agree on this matter, nor was I able to conduct detailed studies; nevertheless, I gained the definite impression that what counted was not the size of the city so much as the location of family members who had sought work away from the village. They were often influential agents of change with their relatives back home. This has been more recently confirmed by the investigations of Ernestine Friedl in a Boeotian village:

> Considerable social mobility exists in Greece . . . but this mobility does not come at the expense of kinship ties. The family remains a strongly functioning unit in spite of the fact that its members may occupy different social positions and may live in many different communities — in villages, towns and cities. . . . Therefore, it is often the upwardly mobile members of his own family who link the villager to the national culture and the national social structure of Greece. As a result, not only are cultural and social changes expected in the village, but continuing urban influence is an integral part of village life.[1]

She then shows how the grown children, even though living in the city, still have some rights over the father's real property back in the village; the same applies to a son-in-law living elsewhere, because of his vested interest in the dowry in land which his wife brought to him and which is located back in the wife's village and perhaps farmed by one of her brothers living there. Dr. Friedl cites four mutually reinforcing patterns of Greek culture which make possible the continuing involvement of the members of the dispersed kinship group in matters of common concern: first, the amount of time that the Greeks spend in reaching a major decision. It will not be arrived at in a hurry and may take as much as a year or two of discussion. Second, Greeks consider visiting between country and a city kin a highly favored form of recreation for both parties. Third, this visitation is made possible by the willingness of the Greeks to double, triple, or quadruple up, sleeping on pallets when beds are insufficient. Fourth, the fact that the rural and urban people involved are kin to each other keeps down much of the suspicion and jealousy that rural people might have of the urban person, thus facilitating continuing interaction.

In personally witnessing this process I have wondered, but never investigated, whether those villagers most vigorous in their denunciation of Athens and city life were those who had no urban relatives.

But one should not overlook the influence that a change in one village has upon those in nearby villages. If the people of one community decide to put a neglected cemetery in order, then those elsewhere will say, "don't you think we had better do something about our cemetery?" and take steps accordingly, while trying to keep the fact that they are imitating the other village from being obvious. There is, thus, some competition among Greek villages, not an intense rivalry but a desire by those in one village to have

1:Sanders Z-5,4 (1952-1959) 1962 EH1 Greece EH1

what they see that other communities have. Nothing is more irksome to those in one village than to be refused electricity from a power line passing close by when the current is made available to other villages in the region.

Most of the time, unplanned social change takes place as a response by villagers to forces from outside the village which impinge on their way of life. The response may be one of solid resistence to certain types of innovation, even though some individuals are for the change but unwilling to take the necessary social risk of advocating it. At other times, a selective change occurs when villagers choose some new items while rejecting others. They may welcome a new opportunity to send their sons away for more education, but demur at letting their daughters pursue a similar advantage. Now and then, the villagers may accept a new practice and give it a local twist not contemplated when the practice originated elsewhere. Women, for instance, have been given the right to vote, but how they exercise this prerogative depends much on local village opinion and the authority of the male family heads. Women who vote just as their husbands tell them to vote, a phenomenon common in many countries other than Greece, are not following the independence of thought and the privacy of ballot which supposedly accompanies the free citizen. But they do vote, which testifies to the fact that an innovation of radical proportions has been accepted.

This interaction between outside forces and the willingness or reluctance of local people to change are best brought into focus in the consideration of planned programs of change, which are confronting the villager on every hand.

Planned Change

Immediately after the end of the guerrilla war, programs of welfare and reconstruction were energetically initiated in rural areas which had suffered most. These were designed to help the villagers rebuild their houses and schools, replace draft animals or depleted flocks, obtain implements and seed. Food staples were also provided where needed. The orphans or otherwise dependent children were brought into special child villages, set up by the Queen's Fund for care and education, until old enough to go out on their own. But these measures, planned chiefly for rehabilitation, also carried with them implications for change. In doing so, they were following a trail previously blazed.

Americans past middle age, who contributed to the Near East Relief at the end of World War I, may or may not know that the funds donated so generously at that time were being put to good use long after the immediate relief needs had been met. Its successor, the Near East Foundation, chose Greece as one of its main arenas of operation. The attempts at rural reconstruction, or village improvement, by this organization in cooperation with the Greek government in the 1930s have been fully described by the educa-

2:Friedl E-5 (1955-1959) 1963 EH1 Greece EH1
Vasilika

west but on the same side of the road is Vasilika's cemetery. It is a small square area outlined by tall cypresses standing just inside the low stone wall which encloses the graves and the small church of St. Nicholas. Mass is said in this church in celebration of the birthday of its patron saint on December 6th. Sunday afternoon Easter services and funeral ceremonies are also held there.

Past the cemetery the road turns east, runs through the village, and constitutes its main street. Almost all the buildings of Vasilika are ranged for about one-fifth of a mile on both sides of this dirt road. Most of the houses are on the ridge side of the road; a single row of structures lines the field side. As one continues east on the village street and looks to the right on the field side of the road, he first sees fields and then the old school building. The next structure is the main church of the village, the church of St. Athanasius. It is the largest building in the settlement, and, like most of the others, it is constructed of field stone. Regular Sunday masses, Christmas and Easter services, baptisms, weddings, as well as the majority of saint's day and other special liturgies are conducted here by the village priest. The bell in the campanile of St. Athanasius summons the villagers to church, the children to school, and the men to an impromptu public meeting on the rare occasions when one is called to discuss village affairs. And, inevitably, the tolling of the bell announces the death of one of the villagers.

Separated from St. Athanasius by a very narrow alley stands a one-room structure which serves as the office for the village government. It now has a telephone, the only one in the village. Near the village headquarters and still on the field side of the road lives the owner of a combined store and coffeehouse. A ground-floor room of his house contains merchandise such as matches, cigarettes, lemons, salt, sugar, canned vegetables and fish, aspirin and penicillin, thread, and miscellaneous small items, while the outside space in front of the store is reserved for chairs and tables. From this coffeehouse, on the field side of the village, the rest of the structures are homes and their outbuildings, roughly in a line near the road.

Starting now at the western end of the village, and looking east at the ridge side of the road, one sees houses and their outbuildings occupying the lower third of the ridge. The uppermost group of homes were, in 1955, reed huts in which some of the shepherd families lived. Other reed huts served as storage houses. By 1961, the dwelling-huts had all been replaced by new brick houses, already wired for electricity but otherwise in various stages of completion. On the ridge side of the road the only buildings which are not exclusively used as residences are, first, another combined store and coffeehouse, which stands on the street diagonally opposite the first and is also a room in the house of its owner, and second, a nearly completed stone reservoir.

Finally, some two hundred feet past the last house and slightly up the slope, stands the small church of St. Cosmas and St. Damian, the patron saints of the village. Here the village celebrates its *paniyiri*, its patron saints' day festival, on the first of July. Mass is celebrated in the morning, and villagers from the surrounding countryside fill the small edifice to overflowing. Occasionally, other masses are said at this church in the course of the year. Except for the

2: Friedl E-5 (1955-1959) EH1 Greece EH1
Vasilika

The reluctance of the villagers to work on the road seems to result not from a lack of motivation but rather from a more compelling distaste for manual labor, and especially for such work when it does not directly or immediately benefit each man's own family. Several years later when a new school was built, some of the parents of the school children helped with parts of the construction. The other villagers did not.

The preparation of the community tax rolls is an important responsibility of the village council. Since taxes are based on land tenure, on produce, and on livestock ownership, the council must prepare lists of people who own land within the boundaries of the *kinotis*. The lists include for each person information on the number of *stremata* in each parcel of land he owns, on the kind of crop raised on each parcel, and on the quality of the land. Lists of the number of horses, mules, sheep, and goats owned by each villager are also compiled. Donkeys and chickens are not taxed and no listing is made of them. The tax is calculated for each item and the completed tax rolls are posted. A villager may feel that he has been unfairly treated, that, for example, the quality of his vineyard has been overestimated or that he has fewer sheep than the number listed. In such a case he can request a revision from the council. His request is usually granted and that settles the matter. If he is not satisfied, he may ask for a hearing before a grievance committee, the members of which are proposed by the council from among the villagers. Any decision of the committee is subject to the veto of the nomarch. In Vasilika disputes over tax rolls are said not to occur, and no grievance committee has been established for many years. There had been a dispute with Parori in the 1930's over the boundaries of the two communities. Since each *kinotis* receives taxes from the land within its boundaries the question of where one *kinotis* begins and the other ends is of considerable importance. The argument between the two villages was finally settled in the courts.

In connection with the preparation of tax rolls, the president has some power over the shepherds living in the community. Anyone classified as a nonresident of Vasilika must pay double the rate for pasturing his animals there. If no permission has been granted, he must pay triple the rate for residents. The question of when and if the new settlers in Vasilika—the shepherds, who had been living there since 1950—would be considered residents of Vasilika, that is, full-fledged citizens of the *kinotis*, was of significance both to the village and to the shepherds. They were finally granted this privilege in 1959.

The actual process of preparing the tax rolls consists of a series of agreements among the villagers, including their council members, as to what amount of property they will declare. In consequence, the tax rolls do not necessarily represent an accurate and complete accounting of property ownership in the *kinotis*. Farmers often try to hide some of their holdings and keep some of their transactions quiet. For example, in order to pay less in taxes on the value of dowries, the cords may show the transfer of a smaller parcel of land to the groom than the one privately agreed on and later privately carried out. Records are probably being kept more accurately now, since credit from the Agricultural Bank is based on land holdings, and proof of ownership must be given to the bank.

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Boundaries and Neighborhoods of the village. 621

Megali Vrisi itself falls into six neighborhoods. These neighborhoods are on the basis of kinship relationships. There are two in the Thracian section and four in the Caucasian section. The village has nearby villages such as Metallikon, South East 1 1/2 miles, Vaptistis, South West 1 3/4 miles, Castanies, 2 miles North West, and North East is Stayrohori, 1 1/2 miles. There is a hard-surfaced road which connects all these villages to Megali Vrisi. 628 361 491

A people of the Soil and their Mobility for the last 25 Years. 167 722

In spite of the fact that the people of Megali Vrisi are a people of the soil, yet some of them were the victims of the great destructive waves of war. The Caucasians were rather stable in their own country, and this forced movement, due to communism, was the first of its kind in their lives for many generations. The un-/11/fortunate Thracians, because of their position in the much fought Balkan states, had to move very regularly from their village. I was often told that this was the fourth village they were building in less than 14 years, due to the Greco-Turkish war, the Greco-Bulgarian war, the first world war and the war of 1920 between Turkey and Greece. After the end of each war the survivors would return back to their village from their place of exile. One could almost read in their faces the effect of the hardships they had been through. The effect is noticed by the type of life they developed which has already become a part of their whole philosophy of living in this world. Small temporary houses--not much furniture, no mattresses, a straw mat and two heavy hand woven blankets for cover--a kettle to cook in, one common bowl for the whole family to eat in, one suit of clothes and few implements. In case of forced movement the wife and the husband are able to carry everything they have on their backs. Usually mobility makes a person cosmopolitan-minded and good mannered, but it had the opposite effect on these people. This may be due to the conditions under which they had to move. [648] 511 167

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Recreational Function. Recreation, as such, in organized form is not found in the villages and yet there is plenty of recreation, which the farmers enjoy throughout the year. For older people to play ball or athletics seems very childish. Certain traditional customs handed down from generation to generation provide both group, inter-village, inter-neighborhood, inter-relative and family recreation. For example when a baby is born the whole larger family rejoices and have feasts, when the baby is baptized the whole neighborhood and relatives are invited to join in the ceremonial feast. When a member of the family gets married the whole village participated with their musical instruments. The marriage feast lasts three days, until everybody is exhausted from children of five years to grown ups of 65 years, by dancing, eating and singing. Another recreation is the celebration of their name days. It is surprising to note that only the name day of the male person is observed more than the female name day.

Then come the numerous religious holidays at dif /34/ ferent seasons when inter-village recreation takes place. The village that celebrates its saint day provides shelter and food for those that came from remote villages. At these holidays or Saint days takes place something similar to that of the county fairs in the United States. After the church service the people gather around the church yard and, with their colorful dresses, dance in a big circle while musical instruments play their local songs. Sometimes as many as 250 people dance together. The intensity and the length of the holiday depends on the importance of the Saint.

The year's most important recreational holiday is at Easter period. Three days are devoted for its celebration and the whole village, friends or enemies eat at the common table, drink from the common glass and dance at the common village dancing place. This is the time of the year when all those that have plenty give to those that do not have. The ovens of the village fill the village with the ordor of roast lamb, cookies and other kinds of pastry. The wine cellars open and the best drinks are offered to the good

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general approval of all. The punishment of the "Gerousia" is ostracism until the person repents and asks forgiveness. The fear and respect towards "Gerousia" is greater than to anybody or group of people. One of the young men planning to divorce his wife because she could not bear any child, told of his experience with the "Gerousia". "Their words are sharper than the sharpest sword".

Latent Neighborhood Conflict Attitudes. The jealousy of the nearby villages toward the successful cooperation of the villagers of Megali Vrisi was noticed many times. The success of Megali Vrisi in bringing the doctors who serve the area to their village, and in making it the center for the health project, naturally created hard feelings with the competing villages. The success with which the Caucasians of Megali Vrisi worked /92/ in organizing a young men's organization, increasing the number of teachers, building their church and having one of the well-organized cooperatives, has made it the leading village of the area. 621 628

Active Conflicts. One of the active conflicts that exists in Megali Vrisi is the one between the Thracians and Caucasians. Each group in trying to preserve its identity tries to dominate the other by having more power in controlling the village council and cooperative. The Thracians as a minority, have never had any chance to get to any office for the last 16 years. The strong opposition they had from the Caucasians, united them on every question raised, and their inability to compete with the Caucasians has developed within every Thracian the illogical type of opposition. "Vote it down if it is a Caucasian proposal, whether good or bad." Regardless of this opposition, the Caucasians undertook to carry on their constructive community work by bearing the share of the Thracians too. Conflicts among different kinship groups were of a minor type and never developed to such a magnitude as to have destructive results. The "Gerousia" checked them. The conflict between the Thracians and the Caucasians was beyond the power of the "Gerousia". The Thracians never had any "Gerousia" and as a result took more cases to the court and spent more /93/ money and time for it. The conflicts among the 621 578 627 [623] [692]